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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002902

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: DEPUTY INTERIOR MINISTER SAYS HIS BOSS NOT ADDRESSING PRISONER ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT S. FORD.
REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (S) SUMMARY: IN A MEETING AT HIS PRIVATE RESIDENCE ON 04 JULY, IRAQI DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERIOR FOR INTELLIGENCE HUSSEIN ALI KAMAL REPORTED THAT MINISTER OF INTERIOR JABR HAS REPEATEDLY IGNORED ORAL AND WRITTEN REPORTS OF ABUSE AND TORTURE OF DETAINEES CARRIED OUT BY UNITS OF THE SPECIAL POLICE COMMANDOS, INCLUDING THE WOLF BRIGADE. THIS INACTIVITY CONTRADICTS JABR'S PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PRIVATE COMMUNICATIONS WITH USG AND COALITION PERSONNEL. END SUMMARY.

MEETING WITH DEPUTY MINISTER FOR INTELLIGENCE

12. (S) BRIGADIER GENERAL EWAN DUNCAN AND IRMO/MOI INTELLIGENCE ADVISOR JEFF MENATH MET WITH DEPUTY MINISTER KAMAL AT HIS PRIVATE RESIDENCE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ZONE AT 2000 HOURS ON 04 JULY. ALSO PRESENT FROM THE IRAQI SIDE WAS BRIGADIER GENERAL NABIL, COUNSELOR TO THE DEPUTY MINISTER, WHO TRANSLATED.

13. (S) DEPUTY MINISTER KAMAL REPEATED POINTS HE HAD MADE PREVIOUSLY: THAT THE COMMANDOS AND PUBLIC ORDER BATTALIONS WERE ABUSING PRISONERS, PRIMARILY SUNNIS, DETAINED IN THE COURSE OF OPERATION LIGHTNING (AN ONGOING MINISTRY OF DEFENSE/MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OPERATION IN AND AROUND BAGHDAD). KAMAL underscored THAT THIS ABUSE WAS BOTH WRONG AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE.

14. (S) NOTE: DEPUTY MINISTER KAMAL IS NOMINALLY CHARGED WITH CONDUCTING INTERROGATIONS OF CAPTURED FIGHTERS TO GLEAN INFORMATION USEFUL TO THE COUNTER-INSURGENCY. HOWEVER, KAMAL CLAIMS THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN ACCESS TO MORE THAN TOKEN NUMBERS OF DETAINEES, AND THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED TO HIS AUTHORITY HAVE BEEN BEATEN AND HAD NOTHING OF INTELLIGENCE VALUE TO OFFER. END NOTE.

15. (S) DEPUTY MINISTER KAMAL FURTHER SAID THAT HE HAD GIVEN A FILE CONTAINING A WRITTEN LIST OF REPORTED INCIDENTS OF TORTURE BY THE COMMANDOS TO MINISTER JABR OVER TWO WEEKS AGO, ONLY TO HAVE THE LIST RETURNED WITH THE ARABIC WORD FOR "NOTED" WRITTEN ON IT. KAMAL SAID HE NOW HAS POSSESSION OF THIS FILE AND EXPRESSED HIS WILLINGNESS TO PASS IT TO THE COALITION.

16. (S) AT AN UPDATE BRIEFING ON OPERATION LIGHTNING ON 05 JULY, MAJOR GENERAL ADNON, COMMANDER OF THE SPECIAL POLICE COMMANDOS AND PUBLIC ORDER BRIGADES, CLAIMED A "CENTRAL INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE" WAS NEEDED TO HANDLE INTERROGATIONS OF ALL DETAINEES. OTHERS, INCLUDING MINISTRY OF DEFENSE OFFICIALS, PICKED UP ON THIS CALL IN SCRIPTED FASHION.

COMMENT

17. (S) WE INTERPRET ADNON'S CALL FOR A "CENTRAL INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE" AS A TRANSPARENT ATTEMPT TO PREEMPT A CONFRONTATION WITH THE COALITION OVER THE CONDUCT OF HIS FORCES AND THEIR HANDLING OF DETAINEES TO DATE. HOWEVER, POST CONSIDERS IT A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE MUCH NEEDED INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "CENTRAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE" UNDER THE CONTROL OF DEPUTY MINISTER KAMAL COULD FACILITATE MORE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT OF INVESTIGATIONS, GREATER LIKELIHOOD OF OBTAINING ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE, AND PROPER DETAINEE CARE.

18. (S) ALSO OF NOTE ARE MINISTER JABR'S REMARKS IN A RECENT MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE CHARGE THAT HE WAS AGAINST ABUSE OF PRISONERS BUT NEEDED PROOF TO ACT. THIS DOES NOT SQUARE WITH THE ABOVE REMARKS OF DEPUTY MINISTER KAMAL, WHO AS NOTED, PRESENTED JABR WITH A WRITTEN LIST OF ABUSE BY THE COMMANDOS WEEKS AGO. JABR HAD ALSO CLAIMED TO POLCOUNS ON JUNE 30 THAT THERE HAD BEEN ABUSES AT THE

HANDS OF THE COMMANDOS AND THAT FIVE OFFICERS HAD BEEN FIRED AND THREE AWAIT TRIAL. WE DO NOT YET HAVE CONCRETE DETAILS ON THESE CASES, ALTHOUGH THE MINISTER HAS PROMISED TO PROVIDE THEM. END COMMENT.

19. (U) REO MOSUL, REO KIRKUK, REO BASRAH, REO HILLAH MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

Satterfield